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Social Studies

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All That Jazz!

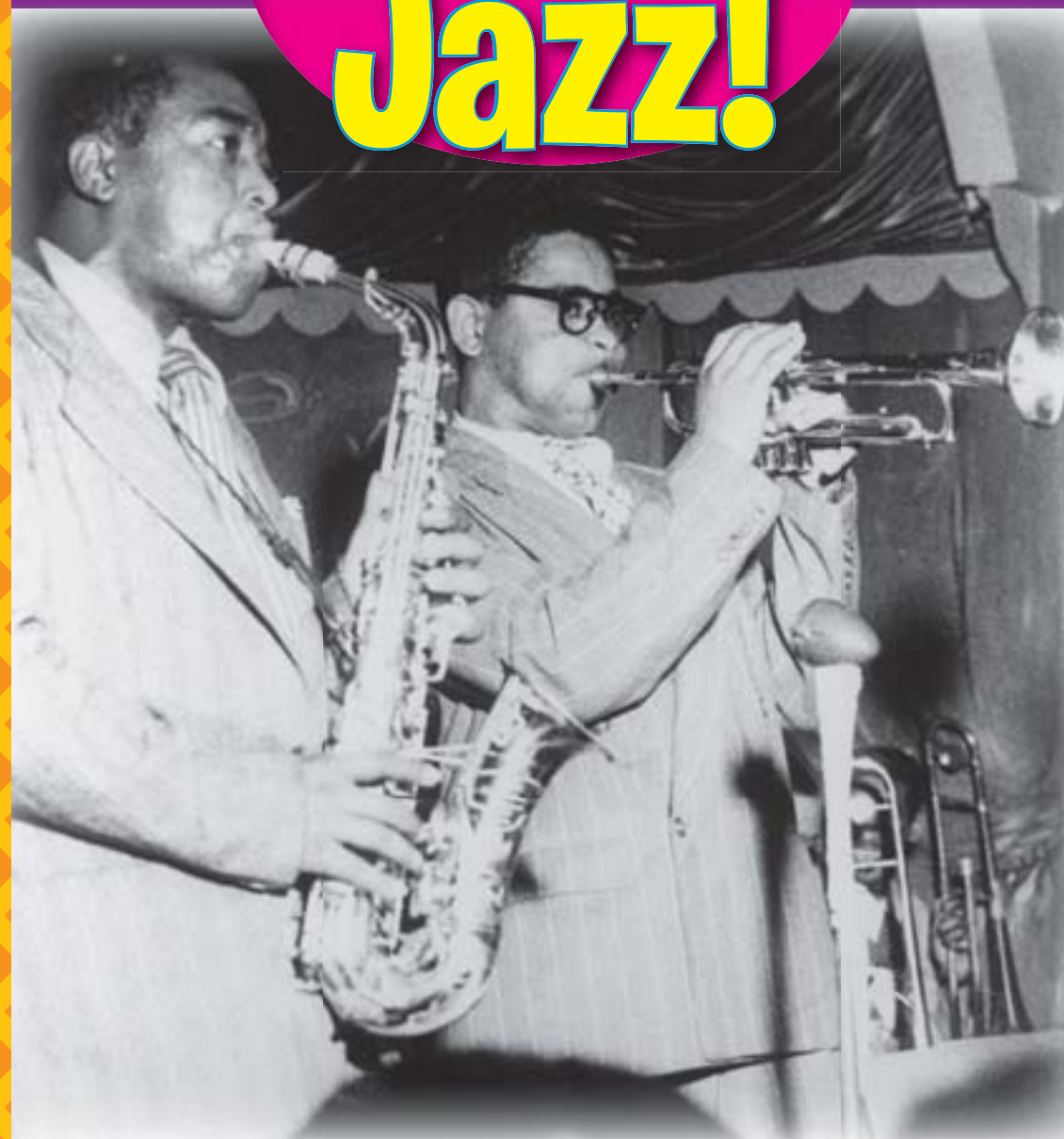


Genre	Concept
Nonfiction	The Unexpected

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By Margie Sigman and Laura Townsend

Concept Words

bebop

influenced

jazz

musicians

ragtime

rhythm

saxophone

Word count: 551

Note: The total word count includes words in the running text and headings only. Numerals and words in chapter titles, captions, labels, diagrams, charts, graphs, sidebars, and extra features are not included.

All That Jazz!

By Margie Sigman and Laura Townsend



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PEARSON

Glenview, Illinois • Boston, Massachusetts • Chandler, Arizona •
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey

Jazz is a kind of music that started in the United States. It grew out of work songs, folk songs, and church music in the South. The first thing you notice about jazz is its strong rhythm. Many people think of New Orleans as the home of jazz.

Buddy Bolden's jazz band in New Orleans around 1905

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New Orleans, Home of Jazz

Many of the first jazz musicians got their start in New Orleans. The people in this southern city came from all over the world—France, Africa, England, and Brazil. Each group of people brought their own kind of music to New Orleans.

Music was part of everyday life in New Orleans. You could hear it on the streets. You could hear it in the churches. A young boy named Louis Armstrong couldn't get enough of the music he heard all around him.

Many New Orleans funeral processions included a musical band.



Louis Armstrong

Armstrong was born in 1901 in New Orleans. His family was very poor. When he was just six years old, he started making money from music. With two other boys, he sang for tips on the streets.



Louis Armstrong's childhood home

Armstrong first learned to play the cornet, a horn that's similar to a trumpet. Later he became known for his trumpet playing. He traveled and played the trumpet for most of his life. He introduced jazz to people all over the world.



Louis Armstrong was a famous jazz trumpeter.

Duke Ellington

Edward Kennedy Ellington grew up in Washington, D. C. His parents were piano players. Ellington took piano lessons as a child, but he was more interested in baseball. Then he heard a different kind of music called ragtime. He loved its rhythms and new ways of putting notes together.



Before long, Ellington was playing piano in bands. Then he started to compose his own music. He formed a band and invited top musicians to play with him. Ellington wrote and played music his own way, because that's how jazz works.



Ellington's childhood friends thought he dressed and acted as if he were royalty, so they gave him the nickname, "Duke."

Billie Holiday

Billie Holiday started her life as Eleanora Fagan Gough. She got her start in jazz by singing along with records by Louis Armstrong and others. Like all good jazz musicians, she soon began to make the music her own. She changed her name too.

Holiday was best known as a singer, but she was also a songwriter. She wrote songs “from the heart,” songs that told about her hard life. Today people are still trying to sing like she sang—from the heart.



Billie Holiday was one of the most famous jazz singers of the mid-twentieth century.



Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie

Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker

In the early 1940s, some young musicians wanted to play jazz in new ways. Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker were two of them. Gillespie played piano and trumpet, and Parker played saxophone.

They worked out new rhythms and called their music bebop. Bebop was exciting and very hard to play. Only the best musicians could keep up with Gillespie and Parker.

Gillespie's way of playing influenced many other jazz musicians who came after him. But he influenced them in another surprising way too.



When he died of cancer in 1993, Gillespie left money to help other musicians. The Dizzy Gillespie Cancer Institute is named for him. It treats other jazz musicians with cancer.



Dizzy Gillespie

Jazz musicians have always influenced each other. They listen for rhythms and ideas that inspire them. They take what they hear, make a few changes, and move the music along. That's what makes jazz so exciting and so much fun.

Reader Response

1. Why is New Orleans often called the birthplace of jazz?
2. What are two ways that Dizzie Gillespie influenced other jazz musicians?
3. What is your favorite kind of music? What influence has it had on you?

